

Crays Hill travellers look to new sites in Essex

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By Jon Austin

TRAVELLERS facing eviction from Dale Farm are now looking at sites across Essex.

The 96 families at Crays Hill have been given until March 1 to come up with options to avoid the £13million eviction. Some may be allowed to stay in [Basildon](#), if the majority move elsewhere.

Travellers are looking at up to four sites, particularly in Harlow and Epping. Dale Farm campaigner Grattan Puxon said travellers could then apply to a £60million Homes and Communities Agency fund to build caravan sites.

The possible locations emerged at the first face-to-face meeting between Basildon Council officials, travellers and Crays Hill residents. The Westminster talks were arranged by Basildon and [Billericay](#) MP [John Baron](#). More talks are expected.

Crays Hill resident Mike Bailey, 46 said he hoped the travellers leave peacefully.

He said: "I felt there was a very clear message throughout the meeting, that the enforcement timetable is firmly fixed.

"Mr Baron encouraged the travellers to make a peaceful withdrawal to sites outside the borough before the expiry of that timetable, as that would benefit all concerned."

Traveller Candy Sheridan, a Norfolk councillor, will work with the agency and Essex County Council on feasible land. Mr Baron will also ask the government for any available sites.

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